

Statement Recognizing South Sudan as an Independent and Sovereign State
July 9, 2011

I am proud to declare that the United States formally recognizes the Republic of South Sudan as a sovereign and independent state upon this day, July 9, 2011. After so much struggle by the people of South Sudan, the United States of America welcomes the birth of a new nation.

Today is a reminder that after the darkness of war, the light of a new dawn is possible. A proud flag flies over Juba, and the map of the world has been redrawn. These symbols speak to the blood that has been spilled, the tears that have been shed, the ballots that have been cast, and the hopes that have been realized by so many millions of people. The eyes of the world are on the Republic of South Sudan. And we know that Southern Sudanese have claimed their sovereignty and shown that neither their dignity nor their dream of self-determination can be denied.

This historic achievement is a tribute, above all, to the generations of Southern Sudanese who struggled for this day. It is also a tribute to the support that has been shown for Sudan and South Sudan by so many friends and partners around the world. Sudan's African neighbors and the African Union played an essential part in making this day a reality. And along with our many international and civil society partners, the United States has been proud to play a leadership role across two administrations. Many Americans have been deeply moved by the aspirations of the Sudanese people, and support for South Sudan extends across different races, regions, and political persuasions in the United States. I am confident that the bonds of friendship between South Sudan and the United States will only deepen in the years to come. As Southern Sudanese undertake the hard work of building their new country, the United States pledges our partnership as they seek the security, development, and responsive governance that can fulfill their aspirations and respect their human rights.

As today also marks the creation of two new neighbors, South Sudan and Sudan, both peoples must recognize that they will be more secure and prosperous if they move beyond a bitter past and resolve differences peacefully. Lasting peace will only be realized if all sides fulfill their responsibilities. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement must be fully implemented, the status of Abyei must be resolved through negotiations, and violence and intimidation in Southern Kordofan, especially by the Government of Sudan, must end. The safety of all Sudanese, especially minorities, must be protected. Through courage and hard choices, this can be the beginning of a new chapter of greater peace and justice for all of the Sudanese people.

Decades ago, Martin Luther King reflected on the first moment of independence on the African Continent in Ghana, saying, "I knew about all of the struggles, and all of the pain, and all of the agony that these people had gone through for this moment." Today we are moved by the story of struggle that led to this time of hope in South Sudan, and we think of those who didn't live to see their dream realized. Now, the leaders and people of South Sudan have an opportunity to turn this moment of promise into lasting progress. The United States will continue to support the aspirations of all Sudanese. Together, we can ensure that today marks another step forward in Africa's long journey toward opportunity, democracy, and justice.

Categories: Statements by the President : South Sudan, U.S. recognition as an independent and sovereign state.

Subjects: Africa : African Union :: Sudan, role; South Sudan : Independence; South Sudan : Relations with Sudan; South Sudan : Relations with U.S.; South Sudan : U.S. assistance; Sudan : Comprehensive Peace Agreement; Sudan : International diplomatic efforts; Sudan : Peace efforts; Sudan : Relations with South Sudan; Sudan : Relations with U.S.; Sudan : Southern Sudan :: Independence referendum; Sudan : Southern Sudan :: Political violence and voter intimidation.

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